

Mrs Janet Finch-Saunders
By email: petitions@senedd.wales

Ref: Exec Office/P-05-895
E-mail: b.myring@rcvs.org.uk
Website: www.rcvs.org.uk

20 July 2020

Dear Mrs Finch-Saunders,

Re: P-05-895 Correspondence from the Chair of the Petitions Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Petition P-05-895, proposing a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals.

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) is the regulator of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses in the United Kingdom, with responsibility for setting and upholding standards of conduct and education. The RCVS has no specific jurisdiction under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 over the level of fees charged by veterinary practices. There are no statutory charges and fees are essentially a matter for negotiation between veterinary surgeon and client. Nor is the RCVS responsible for regulating the ownership of veterinary businesses, including questions of individual or corporate ownership. These are matters for the Competition and Markets Authority and, where appropriate, the courts. Therefore, questions of whether the UK or devolved governments should provide additional financial support to animal owners fall outside of our purview and it is not appropriate for us comment on the petition.

We note that the petitioner states, in their separate comments, that *“the setting of fees by private veterinary practice's is a business decision. But this is a matter the RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) as the body who claims to regulate the profession in the UK can act on if they choose to do so”*. However, this is not the case; we have no powers under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1996 or our Royal Charter to set fees.

The petitioner mentions our ‘under care’ review and expresses concerns that the appropriate authorities will not be consulted. We would like to note that the under care review is not directly related to veterinary fees, and that it will include an open consultation that any stakeholder may respond to.

I hope that this response has been useful; please let me know if there are any areas in which we can provide clarification.

Yours sincerely

Mandisa Greene



President, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons